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TAGS: [PREL](#) [CG](#) [BY](#)

SUBJECT: CONGO, BURUNDI TO EXCHANGE AMBASSADORS

11. (U) SUMMARY: Foreign ministers from Burundi and the DRC signed a joint communique February 11 that calls for the exchange of ambassadors, the sharing of security information, for the DRC to support Burundi's application to join the existing Congo-Rwanda-Uganda Tripartite. END SUMMARY.

Communique

12. (U) An official Burundian delegation led by Foreign Minister Sinunguruza met in Kinshasa February 10 and 11 with Congolese Foreign Minister Ramazani and other GDRC figures. According to a joint communique issued February 11, discussions focused on diplomatic and security issues, as well as on "the future of the DRC-Rwanda-Uganda Tripartite, of which Burundi is an observer." Highlights of the communique follow (informal translation):

The two delegations reaffirmed their countries' "firm intent" to,

A) in the diplomatic sphere:

--work to restore a climate of trust

--do everything to ensure that neither country's territory could be used in any way as a sanctuary for "adventurers and enemies of the DRC and Burundi"

--relaunch the Great Joint Commission, suspended since August 1988

--consolidate and reinforce bilateral relations through the exchange of ambassadors

--negotiate and rapidly conclude a bilateral agreement establishing modalities for consultation, dialogue and assessment aimed at harmonizing positions on issues of common interest at sub-regional, regional and international fora

B) in terms of security along the common border:

--create a climate of mutual trust through regular, permanent information exchanges between the different security services

--stand up a joint verification and monitoring mechanism, in accordance with the Bilateral Agreement on Normalization and Security Cooperation between the DRC and the Republic of Burundi

C) in terms of the DRC-Rwanda-Uganda Tripartite:

--after realization of the Bilateral Agreement on Normalization and Security Cooperation between the DRC and the Republic of Burundi, support the latter's joining the Tripartite Agreement on Regional Security in the Great Lakes Region

13. (U) According to the communique, the two parties had a "fruitful exchange" on subject of the Great Lakes Economic Community (CEPGL), and reaffirmed their countries' willingness to "consider positively" this sub-regional institution's future.

COMMENT

14. (SBU) The relationship appears much improved since August 2004, when in the aftermath of the Gatumba refugee camp massacre, Burundian officials threatened to intervene militarily in the Congo. If the two countries do exchange ambassadors, Rwanda would be only country among the DRC's eastern neighbors without diplomatic representation in Kinshasa. (Uganda has a charge d'affaires in Kinshasa, but not yet an ambassador.) END COMMENT.

15. (U) Bujumbura minimize considered.
MEECE